

Charlyne Cares

July 30, 2010

29 Times When God Speaks to Prodigals

Bob's new book, "**Looking Back 25 Years**" released one week ago is far more than the history of our marriage and ministry. While those things are told, the book also includes page after page of material and teaching to help standers. Chapter titles include, "*Satan's Subtle Tool*;" "*When God Speaks*;" "*God and God Alone*" and "*Self Helps For Standing*." Today we share an excerpt from a chapter titled, "**29 Times When God Speaks to Prodigals**" - - - -

"For God does speak now one way, now another though man may not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men as they slumber in their beds, he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, to turn man from wrongdoing and keep him from pride, to preserve his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword." Job 33:14-18

"Please pray that God will speak to my prodigal spouse." That statement has to be one of the most common prayer requests we receive. Every stander wants God to speak to their mate. The truth is that God has been speaking to the prodigal over and over for some time. A more accurate request for prayer might be, "Please pray that my prodigal spouse will listen to God speaking to them."

During the past 20 years of marriage ministry and in talking with scores of prodigals, I have identified at least 29 times when God speaks to a prodigal or a potential prodigal. Regardless of how far from God an individual might be living, there are distinct times when "something" is telling them, "This is not right." As our trip into the far country grows longer, it becomes progressively easier to tune out that soft voice, due to the hardness of our heart. Nevertheless, that voice will never be silenced.

As long as someone is praying for the prodigal, that voice, which is the voice of God, the Holy Spirit, will not cease. For me, hearing the Holy Spirit speak became more than I could handle on July 7, 1987, the day Charlyne and I remarried.

Let's look at the times when God may speak to His wayward child who already has a spouse:

* **When we are swapping stories with someone of the opposite sex of how miserable our life/spouse/marriage has become -**

One of the lessons Charlyne and I have learned in Ministry is that time together builds intimacy. In fact, even two opposite sex people habitually praying together builds intimacy. That is why we strongly discourage standers having opposite sex friendships as well as opposite sex prayer partners.

Playing the "I'll tell you my story and you can tell me yours" game with someone of the opposite sex is inviting trouble. The feeling that something is wrong that we get when we do this is God confirming that it is wrong.

* Sending flowers, cards, or gifts to someone other than our spouse -

If this is legitimate, why is it being done in secret? You and I know and God knows, too.

* When we exchange phone numbers or email addresses with someone of the opposite sex for personal reasons -

Once again the voice of reason that you hear when you manage to have someone of the opposite sex offer you their phone number or email address for social reasons, is the voice of God Himself saying, "Wrong My child."

* When we are married and ask someone other than our spouse out on a date -

If a man or woman wants to ask someone out, they should ask their own spouse, not someone else's. "We are about to get divorced" or "Things are not good at home" does not justify dating. I understand the feeling of acceptance and exhilaration that can come from asking someone out and their accepting. Requesting an out-of-the-way table, parking behind the building, as well as hoping no one you know spots you, should say to any man or woman that something is wrong. A test to this might be having a good excuse ready just in case you stumble upon someone you know.

* The first time the words "I love you" are exchanged between a prodigal and the other person -

"Tell me you love me," the other person prompts. These are usually the last three words on the mind of a prodigal. Nevertheless, the prodigal utters them to the delight of that person. While this exchange is taking place the prodigal somehow manages to think back to the first time they and their spouse exchanged those words without being asked by the other, a thought planted there at that moment by God as a reminder of your covenant spouse.

Since leaving their family, the word love, to the prodigal, has come to mean only, "You have something that I want." During the prodigal journey, until they return home, God is going to be reminding prodigals time and time again what love really is and what it isn't.

* The first time we are introduced to the other person's family -

Remember how out of place you felt, as if you did not belong there? That was one of God's gentle nudges for you toward your own home, where you are needed and being prayed for.

* When we place the financial needs of the other person ahead of our family -

Somehow the needs of that other person have become more important than the needs of our own family. We attempt to balance everything, but it just doesn't work out. It's not that you want to be cheap, but those "other people" somehow always demand to be put first. The guilt we feel over not meeting our own family's needs is from God.

* When we realize that we are forsaking our own family -

Even though nothing is verbalized, hearing that our kids at home are in trouble or having school problems breaks the heart of the toughest prodigal spouse and parent. That is the way God designed families to be.

* On every holiday -

Be it Christmas or Fourth of July, the other person celebrates with such different traditions than what we had at home. That moment when we prodigals wonder what our spouses are doing on that day is when God is speaking restoration to us.

* When we are with the other person's friends and they discuss events and people and we are clueless -

"No, I never met their uncle Moe from Buffalo who had an artificial eye." In fact, you did not even know that other person had an uncle named Moe. Somehow you and that person just cannot build what you and your spouse had at home. It appears that every prodigal, and most of the "other people", live in the present, with little thought given to the past or to the future. It is all about right now.

* When the other person embarrasses us -

We never realized what an ignoramus that other person really is. How could we not have noticed how obnoxious they are, how overweight, or whatever the fault? If love is blind, then lust for us prodigals must be double blind. Could it be God reminding us of some negative traits we never noticed in that other person that once thrilled us so much?

Sure, the covenant spouse at home has a few faults, just as every prodigal does. However, when God made the covenant spouse and the present prodigal one-flesh through marriage, when he "molded and fused" us together, as the Greek translates one-flesh, God also matched our strengths and our weaknesses together in a miraculous way to make us one. Attempting to make it work with a third person is like walking on one stilt. It is not very easy to do.

* When the other person becomes pregnant -

You hear the other person saying it was a planned pregnancy. Yes, it was planned, but by one person in the relationship and not by both. Regardless of who did the planning, God loves that child and can still work His miracle of restoration around the pregnancy. Nothing is too great for Him.

* When the spouse at home does something positive that we discover by accident -

You hear from a mutual friend that your spouse has gone back to school or is fixing up their home. Maybe they received an award at work or received some special recognition from a civic group. The "buyer's remorse" prodigals experience over not being around is sent from God; just a reminder of what you gave up to be where you are right now.

* When you have to introduce that other person to someone you know -

What do you say? "This is my girlfriend (or boyfriend)." Maybe "This is the person I'm having an affair with." If you have trouble introducing the person you're with, God is saying that you are with the wrong person.

How about simply telling the truth and say, "This is the person the devil sent into my life to bust up my marriage." I can assure you that such a statement would bust up that sinful relationship rather quickly.

* When you see couples who were your friends as couples and you see how happy they are -

That is simply God's reminder that He created us to be in families.

* When we have a crisis and the other person does not seem sincerely concerned -

That's because the other person has not been through the thick and thin of life with us, as has our spouse. They did not support you while you went to school, nor were they there to comfort you during the dark moments of life. Your new relationship is superficial, where your marriage grew deep roots through tears and joys together.

* When we wish we were back at home -

It may be only a fleeting thought as something reminds us of home, and for a split second we wish we were there. God is calling.

* When the other person talks about marriage -

Nothing is more frightening to a prodigal than to have the other person bring up the subject of marriage. Not just any marriage, but marriage between the other person and the prodigal. They have pushed for the prodigal to divorce, which they pursued in hopes of keeping the other person happy, but now that divorce has happened or is imminent, there is talk about marriage. We prodigals sign on to these other relationships for the thrill and the fun that the sin originally brought, but not for that marriage talk we have to keep dodging.

* When we attempt to pray and read the Bible and everything is blank -

Most prodigals have cracked the Bible open at least once in their lives. When the prodigal lifestyle starts to turn to torment, many prodigals do so once again. But what does it mean when you open the Bible and the words seem not even to make sense? You thought you knew how to pray to ask God to help you out of that mess you are in, but when you try, you are speechless. You think, "What if there really is something to this Hell? What if I died today?" My friend, Jesus is calling your name. He wants you to come home to your Heavenly Father and to your family. Remember, it is never too late.

As I typed these points I had to ask myself how could I have been so stupid, so blinded and deceived to have walked out of the church and out of my home and to think that God was ever going to bless any relationship I might be in, nor would He ever bless any of my endeavors.

If God has called you to pray for a prodigal, be it your husband or your wife, please never give up. I would not want your beloved spouse to miss out on an opportunity like I have had to reflect on what I did. That is just one of a million blessings that go right along with a restored marriage. Even more than this, I would never want your prodigal to miss out on life eternal with our Lord Jesus. -R.E.S.

Order or read more about "Looking Back 25 Years" when you visit -

<http://rejoiceministries.org/r.php?num=5ifk1>

Looking ahead with Jesus,
Bob (and Charlyne) Steinkamp
Rejoice Marriage Ministries, Inc.
Post Office Box 10548

Pompano Beach, FL 33061 USA

<http://rejoiceministries.org> (Ministry web site)

<http://rejoiceministries.org/r.php?num=tizwl> (Bookstore)

<http://rejoiceministries.org/r.php?num=1qrwh> (24/7 Radio)

<http://rejoiceministries.org/r.php?num=z8hij> (Support)

If you are a newer reader to "Charlyne Cares," you may not yet know about "Stop Divorce Radio." We provide free teachings and music by Internet radio especially for men and women who are praying for marriage restoration. Some people have it playing 24/7. Listen from -

<http://rejoiceministries.org/r.php?num=1qrwh>

Devotional Copyright© 2010 Rejoice Marriage Ministries, Inc.

Scripture quoted by permission and are from the Holy Bible; New International Version® Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Printed from <http://rejoiceministries.org/cc/view.php?id=4036>

Rejoice Marriage Ministries, Inc.
Post Office Box 10548
Pompano Beach, FL 33061
<http://rejoiceministries.org>